'In time of peace, prepare for war' seems to be the order of the day in Europe. This sheaf of articles on Germany, Italy, France, and Soviet Russia gives a disturbing but authoritative picture.

In Time of PEACE

A European War Symposium

I. The Case for Germany

By Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels

Translated from the *Deutsche Nachrichten Büro*, German Official Press Service

THE German public observes with unanimous amazement the reaction produced in responsible circles of the chief European capitals by the announced restoration of the military-service law. Germany believed itself justified in assuming that the world would take cognizance of this step with evident relief and a feeling of inner satisfaction. For the open and unconcealed statement of German intentions really represents an element of stabilization that is advantageous, if not actually indispensable, to a logical and fruitful understanding of the European situation. The secrecy that for months and years has surrounded the German armament question has been deplored frequently and actively in official and unofficial places abroad, especially on the ground that peace could not, as they say, be consolidated unless Germany's intentions were fully known. These sources have more than once expressed the wish that Germany would stop its secret manœuvres and openly and clearly reveal where it was going, what it wanted, and what plans it was following.

This desire was all the more imperatively expressed because most foreign newspapers, especially the more authoritative ones, fell into vague and fantastic speculations, which had no

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

foundation in reality but seemed chiefly designed to create an extremely dangerous military psychosis in the people. Nowhere can exaggeration be pushed so far as in the field of military policy. What is needed here is clarity, for only clarity can give rise to that clear, realistic, logical development that possesses the inner power to illuminate a confused situation and from that situation to crystallize the decisive elements of security and political stability.

II

How much the world felt the need to have the question of German armament cleared up can be seen from the fact that it used every means at its disposition to uncover the information that Germany was withholding. The historical act of the Leader on March 16 has put an end to these vague conjectures. The world now knows where it stands. That does not mean that it did not know this before. The proclamation and law concerning rearmament have merely made completely certain what was already becoming known and what was not concealed either in official or in unofficial announcements abroad.

In a debate in the English House of Commons on November 28, 1934, Winston Churchill said, 'Germany is rearming. From what we are told and from what comes to us from every possible source, although little is said about it publicly, Germany already possesses a powerful, well-equipped army with excellent artillery and tremendous reserves of trained men. German arms factories are working on practically a wartime basis. War materials are pouring out of them, especially during the last twelve months, at a constantly increasing rate.' In other words, on November 28, 1934, an English politician was already anticipating German rearmament to an extent that was not even reached by the recent law of March 16. Germany can welcome the conclusion that Churchill drew from this fact: 'There is no ground here for the assumption that Germany will attack us.' In the same speech Churchill explained that the time had come 'when the secrecy that surrounded German rearmament had to be dissipated.'

The answer that Baldwin gave to Churchill's speech in the name of the British Government is equally significant. He explained, 'One of the causes of the present malaise in Europe is, as I shall indicate, not only the fear but also the uncertainty outside and the secrecy inside Germany.' Can the German Government be blamed, then, if four months later it does away with this malaise and makes an end of fear and uncertainty by an open announcement?

Baldwin explains still further, 'I am convinced—and I speak here with a sense of responsibility when I discuss the condition of fear that prevails throughout Europe—I am convinced not only of the kind of fear to which I have referred but also of the fear of an unknown terror that may break out, a fear that is chiefly due to uncertainty of what is happening in Germany.'

The proclamation of the Leader to the German people and to world public opinion on that Saturday evening expressly states that the reintroduction of compulsory military service in Germany does not involve the slightest belligerent intention. On the contrary, it will serve only to maintain peace. The fear that some unknown

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

terror may break out is now ended by the elimination of uncertainty concerning Germany's intentions.

On March 8, 1935, the *Matin* of Paris described 'a conversation with Marshal Pétain,' in which the Marshal explained, 'Prolongation of the term of military service is absolutely necessary and imperative, for it is not a theoretical but a practical question. In view of Germany's intensive rearmament and the danger of a surprise attack, how shall we protect our frontiers? The neighboring army consists of six hundred thousand men, who are instantly available for active service.'

In a speech opening the fair at Lyons on March 10, the French Prime Minister Flandin announced that 'the armament of Germany, which the signers of the Versailles Treaty are powerless to prevent, has made the arrival of the years in which French recruits fall below normal much more dangerous.' In his important speech before the Chamber on March 15 announcing the reintroduction of two years of military service, the French Prime Minister said, 'According to all known plans, Germany will have at least six hundred thousand men by 1936.' Whereupon this allegation was seized upon by the French Government as the reason and excuse for restoring two years of compulsory military service in France.

How, then, can Germany help being amazed when world public opinion, in view of this documentary evidence, expresses astonishment and irritation because Germany restores universal compulsory military service in a form that does not go so far as statements made by official sources in discussions of domestic policies within the various countries? Would n't it be more bold, consistent, and logical, would n't it be more realistic, more cognizant of the new state of affairs, if everyone took the point of view that the English publicist, J. L. Garvin, expressed in his editorial in the *Observer* on March 3, 1935: 'As a moral condition, with respect to arming or disarming, Germany's absolute equality among the Great Powers must be recognized once and for all. It must be as fully recognized as though the World War and the Treaty of Versailles had never been.'

Germany waited fifteen years for the signers of the Versailles Treaty to follow the German example, as they had obligated themselves to do, and disarm. Instead, the world armed itself and, as far as disarmament is concerned, has confined itself to theoretical and Platonic debates. The Leader has often proclaimed openly enough that he was ready to scrap the last machine gun if the world would do the same. Germany had to draw the consequences from this situation, especially since the other countries were strengthening their armies on the theory that an uncontrolled element had appeared, a theory, furthermore, that was largely based on fantastic assumptions. An unarmed country in the midst of a world armed to the teeth is always an invitation to war. It is not an armed but an unarmed Germany that has disturbed Europe.

The reintroduction of compulsory military service restores the balance that is necessary before the great unsolved problems of world politics can be fruitfully discussed. Germany wants to collaborate on peace. It needs peace as much as all the other nations do. The world will be well advised to at-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tempt the more rewarding task of developing from the situation that has been created those elements that can lead to permanent stability. All nations are filled with a profound desire for this, and nobody in Europe with any feeling of responsibility whatever believes that a new war can eliminate the injustices of a war that were not eliminated by seventeen years of peaceful labor.

In this situation, offering, as it does, every possibility for genuine understanding between nations, clarity and logic are essential. Nothing would be more dangerous than to build a new structure of illusions and wishful dreams. The more inclined responsible people are to encourage reason and sound human understanding, the more complete will be the happy turn that Europe has recently entered. The atmosphere of secrecy, which has been so often criticized, is merely removed. Germany wishes to meet the world on an equal footing, seriously prepared to collaborate with the best of its powers for the peace of Europe and reconciliation between nations.

The German people has welcomed the clear and bold decision of the Leader with profound gratitude. Its answer did not take the form of military enthusiasm and hymns of revenge. Full of a sense of pride and worthiness, it felt quietly sure of its own power, for its destiny lies well protected in Adolf Hitler's hand.

II. The French Position

By General Debeney

Translated from *Vu*, Paris Topical Weekly

THE Frenchman loves his country, and he is right, for he will not find a more beautiful one anywhere. He is also ready to stretch out his hand to other nations provided they do not threaten his security. Above all, he wants to be master in his own house and to work in peace. Security first. To assure this security, he will accept every necessity, even heavy sacrifice, but he wants to be given serious reasons for doing so. After all, he is the one who will go to the frontier, and it is from his pocket that the money will come. Hence, he is thoroughly justified in asking, 'Why extend the period of compulsory military training from one year to two?'

Let me reply briefly: to assure the country solid protection. But is n't its present protection solid? Yes, up to now it has been, but to-day it is insufficient for two reasons, which I shall explain.

The kind of protection referred to is required in the opening period of any conflict. It means that mobilization goes forward in complete security and that the national armies have time to form their ranks. It also assures territorial integrity in the early days of the war, because at the present time the advance of enemy troops would place the battlefield on our own soil and, whatever the issue might be, would lead to ravages and destruction with which we are all too familiar.

This double task of providing protection behind the lines and on the frontier falls to the lot of the active

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED